

AS APPROVED

**Golf Commission Meeting
January 26, 2009
Minutes**

Members Present: Thomas Galla, Chairman; Owen Evans, Vice-Chairman; Sue Casey; Ron Dray; Don Espach; George Furkiotis; Tony Johnson; Jim Steidlmayer

Members Absent: Bruce Gerstman

Chairman Tom Galla called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

Review and approval of the Minutes

Review and approval of the Minutes of December 15, 2008... There was a motion made by Mr. Steidlmayer seconded by Mr. Furkiotis to approve the minutes as is. Motion carried unanimously.

Audience Participation

- None

General Manager Report (Bobby Brown)

Previous Meeting Follow-up:

- The Purchasing Department will submit the bid for the cart path paving work by January 30th with bids due by mid-February. A stipulation in the contract will be that the work must be completed by June 1. Mr. Steidlmayer asked if there will be a performance bond requirement and was informed that it would add too much to the cost of the project to be included.
- The Greens Committee winter work projects are being completed with 90% of the tree work accomplished to date.
- Mr. Brown met with the Sr. Men's Club to discuss programs for the 2009 season. The club requested the golf course consider a special for seniors. Mr. Brown informed them that he was going to present several specials for Commission consideration at the February meeting and would include their request. The Commission tabled the Sr. Men's request until the February meeting.

Golf Course Maintenance:

- Director of Operations – Golf Course Properties (Hidalgo Nagashima); Superintendent (Ed Zenisky); Mechanic (Rich Plaveck); Four full-time greensmen (Jeff Cook, Jerry Cook, Chris Gallant, Craig Romano)
- The following projects have been completed:
 - Preventative maintenance on greensmowers
 - Fairway units being serviced.
 - Pond maintenance contracted for 2009
 - Wood removed from #15 stream
 - Soil left by DaVinci moved further back. The soil will be used to dress the edges of the cart paths when the project is completed.
- Issues:
 - The course is on day 20 of ice cover today. After approximately 45 days of ice cover for poa annua and 60 days for bentgrass, the grass is in danger of suffocation. Maintenance measures, including the creation of channels in the ice to drain water, may have to be taken if the course is ice covered at that time.

Greens Committee (Owen Evans)

- None.

Golf Course Operations:

- Hired Dave Bove as new assistant golf professional. Dave is a Trumbull native and has just completed golf management studies at Campbell University.
- To date, there are eight confirmed tournaments for the 2009 season.
- The ATK staff will be attending the PGA Show and education conference in Florida later this week. Areas of interest will be golf carts, marketing, tee time utilization, third party tee time vendors, and tournament gift ideas.
- Hidalgo Nagashima will be attending (at his own expense) the Golf Course Superintendents Association Conference in New Orleans next week.

Plant and Facility (Tony Johnson):

- One of the new furnaces was blowing black smoke into the air and in the furnace room. Added Comfort has been out on a few occasions to make minor adjustments to correct the problem.
- Added Comfort has not yet been out to quote the project for a new control panel in the Pro Shop. Added Comfort will also do a walk through of the attic area to inspect the insulation and determine the extent of the work required.

Food and Beverage:

- The restaurant and ATK Golf Services will be hosting a Tashua Golf experience night on Thursday, March 5th from 5:30 – 8:00 PM. The night will be geared to hotels, tournaments, and individual golfers.
- Domenic Faustini, Concessionaire, is revisiting different menu options for the Grill Room. To date Domenic has obtained menus from six neighboring clubs and is considering several options.
- Domenic also expressed an interest in revisiting the idea of a beverage cart. Several issues regarding the operation of a beverage cart were discussed including the training of the individual, the possibility of delayed pace-of-play and the consideration of banning coolers on the course. Several Commissioners voiced opposition to a beverage cart. Additional information will be gathered and presented at the next Commission meeting.

Executive (Tom Galla)

- Performance reviews for both Mr. Brown and Mr. Nagashima have been completed. Contractual issues will be discussed in Executive Session.

Finance (Don Espach)

- Mr. Espach reported that the audited report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008 has been received. Tashua Knolls finished the year \$17,688 in the black. A meeting has been scheduled for February 4th with the auditors to go over specifics.
- A meeting was held at Town Hall to go over the budget for the next fiscal year. Salary and general fund reimbursement figures have been updated. At this point, the budget stands as presented and will begin the process of Finance Board and Town Council approval.

Mr. Espach then began the discussion of setting rates for the 2009 calendar year. Mr. Espach's proposal was based on the following assumptions:

- 39,211 Knolls Rounds. This matches the average number of rounds per year over the last three years
- 65% Knolls cart utilization which is equivalent to previous years' use
- 16,392 Glen Rounds which matches the number of rounds played in calendar year 2008
- 57% Glen cart utilization which is equivalent to previous years' use
- 1450 Monday outing rounds which matches the projected number of rounds in 2008/09
- ID Cards based upon the number sold in calendar year 2008

These assumption leaves us \$61,676 short of the budget number we need to meet of \$2,009,807. Mr. Espach had previously emailed all Commission members a Revenue Increase Worksheet with one proposed option. The worksheet allowed the Commissioners to explore different options on their own.

Prior to discussions, Mr. Galla thanked Mr. Espach for all of his work and dedication in thinking through, preparing worksheets, attending meetings, and communicating with fellow Commissioners. Mr. Galla felt Mr. Espach delivered well-prepared budget and rate proposals on behalf of the Tashua Knolls Golf Course.

A discussion then began regarding the basic assumption of the proposed rates, which is the need to increase rates. Various Commissioners spoke about their opinion of the economy in general and the future of golf and Tashua Knolls in particular. Everyone agreed that the nation is facing tough economic conditions and that while it would be nice not to have to raise rates, it is just not feasible given the rising cost of everything from utilities, to pesticides, and contracts with outside vendors. Also, at least for 2009 the public golf courses were probably in a better position to weather the storm than the private courses. It was also too difficult to predict much past the next calendar year, as no one knows at this point what will happen.

The discussion then turned to the particulars of the rate increase. The original proposal by Mr. Espach included a \$1 rate increase in seven resident categories and five \$1 rate increases in non-resident categories. It also included a \$10 ID increase for residents, and a \$5 ID increase for seniors and juniors. A lengthy discussion was held regarding this proposal and several other options. Several Commissioners felt strongly that this option was weighted more heavily with an increase toward residents and they did not feel this was the best option. An equal number of Commissioners felt that the non-residents generate 65% of our income despite the fact that they represent significantly less than 50% of our players. They felt equally strongly that if we drove away too many non-residents, then residents would be facing a large rate increase in the future.

Various other topics were discussed including our competitiveness and value as compared to other area courses and in particular our 9-hole and cart rates as compared to other courses where we may not be as competitive. Also, there was a large increase in our cart rate for the 2008 season. As the topics were being discussed it was suggested that we table setting the rates until the February Commission meeting. After an informal vote, it was decided to go forward and set the rates.

After settling on three different rate options, each resulting in an overall revenue increase of approximately \$60,000, a vote was taken on the interest in pursuing each option:

A motion was made by Mr. Espach, seconded by Mr. Johnson to consider Option 1 (a \$1 rate increase in seven resident categories, \$1 increase in five non-resident rate categories, a \$10 rate increase in Resident IDs and a \$5 rate increase in senior and junior IDs.)

A motion was made by Mr. Steidlmayer, with no second, to consider Option 2 (increase only the rate for a resident ID by \$20 and seniors and juniors by \$5.)

A motion was made by Mr. Furkiotis, seconded by Mr. Dray, to consider Option 3, (a \$1 increase in all categories except for carts by \$1)

As there was no second to Option 2, a vote then proceeded to approve either Option 1 or 3.

A motion was made by Mr. Furkiotis, seconded by Mr. Dray, to consider Option 3, (a \$1 increase in all categories except for carts by \$1). Motion failed 3 – 4 (opposed: Espach, Evans, Johnson, Galla; Abstain: Steidlmayer)

A motion was made by Mr. Espach, seconded by Mr. Johnson to consider Option 1 (a \$1 rate increase in seven resident categories, \$1 increase in five non-resident rate categories, a \$10 rate increase in Resident IDs and a \$5 rate increase in senior and junior IDs.) Motion carried 4 – 3 (opposed: Casey, Dray, Furkiotis; Abstain: Steidlmayer)

Correspondence

- The CSGA submitted a request to host its 2010 State Amateur Championship Qualifier:

Mr. Johnson made a motion; seconded by Mr. Steidlmayer to approve the CSGA request to its 2010 State Amateur Championship Qualifier on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 with green fees waived. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

- None.

Old Business

- Mr. Evans followed-up on the difficulty the Men's Club was having in arranging dinners at the Tashua Knolls Restaurant for two of its 2009 golf outings. In one instance the restaurant was not available at all and in the second instance, the Men's Club would have to share the restaurant with a ladies event. A discussion was held as to the feasibility of sharing the facility and/or the possibility of changing the dates of the events. Both of the possibilities were not ideal for the club and several Commissioners felt that golf should come first and not events of

the restaurant. Therefore it was proposed that the club be allowed an exception to the rule that a group must have their meal at the restaurant.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Johnson to allow clubs to have their meals elsewhere if there is a conflict with a previously booked event at the restaurant. Motion carried 6 – 2 (Abstain: Casey, Steidlmayer).

Executive Session

A motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter was made at 8:55 PM by Mr. Espach; seconded by Mr. Furkiotis. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion to come out of Executive Session at 10:00 PM was made by Mr. Furkiotis; seconded by Mrs. Casey. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Steidlmayer, seconded by Mr. Espach to approve a bonus of \$10,000 for the General Manager pursuant to the terms of his contract for service performed in 2008. Motion passed 7 – 1 (Abstain: Dray).

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Espach approve a salary increase of 3.5% for calendar year 2009 for the Director of Golf Course Properties pursuant to the terms of his contract for service performed in 2008. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 10:05 PM was made by Mr. Evans; seconded by Mr. Dray. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Plumeau
Golf Commission Clerk